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Communist China: Former Red Guards have been dealt yet another blow in their effort to claim leadership posts in the rebuilt Chinese Communist Party apparatus.

A recent broadcast by Shanghai radio, for example, railed against "ultraleftists" whose ambitions are disrupting party reconstruction. The broadcast flatly asserted that mass organizations composed of former Red Guard factionalists must accept the leadership of party organs at all levels. It strongly implied that this must be the case even if the factionalists are underrepresented in the party. Shanghai radio also echoed a current nationwide propaganda theme that mass organization representatives should not expect to take the lead in forming party branches simply because they were activists in the Cultural Revolution.

Peking's prescription that the new party committees should include such mutually antagonistic groupings as the Red Guards and former party officials who were ousted by the Red Guards has precipitated considerable quarreling between the two groups over party staffing. Until recently Peking has dealt with this problem largely by issuing pious exhortations to both elements to "unify." The latest Shanghai broadcast, as well as others from elsewhere in China, however, indicates that Peking is now determined to continue to urge local units to give short shrift to militant elements in the party-building process unless they toe the mark.

Peking's anxiety to quicken the tempo of local party building apparently outweighs its reluctance to alienate the former Red Guards. Nevertheless, Peking's hard line is a bitter pill for the factionalists to swallow and they are still likely where possible to persist in jockeying for positions.



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NOTE

Netherlands: Prime Minister De Jong is considering calling for early parliamentary elections if the opposition parties do well in the provincial elections in March. Polls over the past year have reflected a steady erosion of public support for his four-party coalition, and the legislative tasks facing the government in the period before mandatory parliamentary elections in May 1971 are not likely to boost its popularity. By moving the elections up to this year, De Jong would hope to take advantage of an increasingly bitter doctrinal dispute in the opposition Labor Party, as well as to forestall an even weaker electoral position later.

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